

List of time periods

The categorization of the past into discrete, quantified named blocks of time is called periodization.^[1] This is a list of such **named time periods** as defined in various fields of study. Major categorization systems include **cosmological** (time periods in the origin and mass evolution of the universe), **geological** (time periods in the origin and evolution of the Earth), **anthropological** and **historical** (time periods in the origin and evolution of human civilization).

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Human time periods

These can be divided broadly into prehistorical periods and historical periods (when written records began to be kept).

In archaeology and anthropology, prehistory is subdivided around the three-age system, this list includes the use of the three-age system as well as a number of various designation used in reference to sub-ages within the traditional three.

The dates for each age can vary by religion. On the [geologic time scale], the [Holocene] epoch starts at the end of the last glacial period of the current ice age (c. 10,000 BCE) and continues to the present. The beginning of the Mesolithic is usually considered to correspond to the beginning of the Holocene epoch.

General periods

- **Pre-History** – Period between the appearance of *Homo* ("humans"; first stone tools c. three million years ago) and the invention of writing systems (for the Ancient Near East: c. five thousand years ago).
 - Paleolithic – the earliest period of the Stone Age
 - Lower Paleolithic – time of archaic human species, predates *Homo sapiens*
 - Middle Paleolithic – coexistence of archaic and anatomically modern human species
 - Upper Paleolithic – worldwide expansion of anatomically modern humans, the disappearance of archaic humans by extinction or admixture with modern humans; earliest evidence for pictorial art.
 - Mesolithic (Epipaleolithic) – a period in the development of human technology between the Palaeolithic and Neolithic periods.
 - Neolithic – a period of primitive technological and social development, beginning about 10,200 BCE in parts of the Middle East, and later in other parts of the world.
 - Chalcolithic (or "Eneolithic", "Copper Age") – still largely Neolithic in character, where early copper metallurgy appeared alongside the use of stone tools.
 - Bronze Age – not part of prehistory for all regions and civilizations who had adopted or developed a writing system.
 - Iron Age – not part of prehistory for all civilizations who had introduced written records during the Bronze Age.
 - Protohistory – period between prehistory and history, during which a culture or civilization has not yet developed writing but other cultures have already noted its existence in their own writings; the absolute timescale of "protohistory" varies widely depending on the region, from the late 4th millennium BCE in the Ancient Near East to the present in the case of uncontacted peoples.
- **Ancient History** – Aggregate of past events from the beginning of recorded human history and extending as far as the Early Middle Ages or the Postclassical Era. The span of recorded history is roughly less than five thousand years, beginning with the earliest linguistic records in the third millennium BCE in Mesopotamia and Egypt.
 - **Classical Antiquity** – Broad term for a long period of cultural history centered on the Mediterranean Sea, comprising the interlocking civilizations of ancient Greece and ancient Rome, collectively known as the Greco-Roman world. It is the period in which Greek and Roman society flourished and wielded great influence throughout Europe, North Africa and the Middle East.
- **Post-Classical History** – Period of time that immediately followed ancient history. Depending on the continent, the era generally falls between the years CE 200–600 and CE 1200–1500. The major classical civilizations that the era follows are Han China (ending in 220), the Western Roman Empire (in 476), the Gupta Empire (in the 550s), and the Sasanian Empire (in 651).

- **Middle Ages** – Lasted from the 5th to the 15th century. It began with the collapse of the Western Roman Empire in 476 and is variously demarcated by historians as ending with the Fall of Constantinople in 1453, merging into the Renaissance and the Age of Discovery.
 - Early Middle Ages (also called Dark Ages)
 - High Middle Ages
 - Late Middle Ages
- **Modern History** – After the post-classical era
 - **Early Modern Period** – The chronological limits of this period are open to debate. It emerges from the Late Middle Ages (c. 1500), demarcated by historians as beginning with the Fall of Constantinople in 1453, in forms such as the Italian Renaissance in the West, the Ming Dynasty in the East, and the rise of the Aztec in the New World. The period ends with the beginning of the Age of Revolutions.
 - **Late Modern Period** – Began approximately in the mid-18th century; notable historical milestones included the French Revolution, the American Revolution, the Industrial Revolution and the Great Divergence
 - **Contemporary History** – History within living memory. It shifts forward with the generations, and today is the span of historic events from approximately 1945 that are immediately relevant to the present time.

Sociological periods

Only for late modern contemporary history.

- Nineteen-twenties (1920–1929)
- Nineteen-thirties (1930–1939)
- Nineteen-forties (1940–1949)
- Nineteen-fifties (1950–1959)
- Nineteen-sixties (1960–1969)
- Nineteen-seventies (1970–1979)
- Nineteen-eighties (1980–1989)
- Nineteen-nineties (1990–1999)
- Two-thousands (2000–2009)
- Twenty-tens (2010–2019)
- Twenty-twenties (2020–2029)
- Twenty-thirties (2030–2039)
- Twenty-forties (2040–2049)
- Twenty-fifties (2050–2059)
- Twenty-sixties (2060–2069)
- Twenty-seventies (2070–2079)
- Twenty-eighties (2080–2089)
- Twenty-nineties (2090–2099)

Technological periods

- Prehistory

- **Paleolithic** (Lower, Middle, Upper)
- **Mesolithic** (Epipaleolithic)
- **Neolithic**
- **Chalcolithic** (or "Eneolithic", "Copper Age")
- **Ancient History** (Bronze and Iron Age aren't part of prehistory for all regions and civilizations who had adopted or developed a writing system)
 - **Bronze Age**
 - **Iron Age**
- **Late Middle Ages**
 - **Renaissance**
- **Early Modern history**
- **Modern History**
 - **Industrial Age** (1760–1970)
 - **Machine Age** (1880–1945)
 - Age of Oil (1901–present)
 - Jet Age (1940s)
 - **Atomic Age** (a.k.a. **Nuclear Age**) (1945/1950–present) ^[2]
 - **Space Age** (1957–present)
 - **Information Age** (1970–present)
 - The Multimedia Age (1987–present)
 - The Social Age (1996–present)
 - The Big Data Age (2001–present)^[3]

Wars and financial crisis periods

- **Modern History**
 - World War I (1914–1918)
 - Interwar Period (1918–1939)
 - Roaring Twenties (1920–1929)
 - Great Depression (1929–1939)
 - World War II (1939–1945)
 - Post-war era (1946–1962)
 - Cold War (Soviet Union and United States, and their allies, 1945–1991)
 - Korean War (1950–1953)
 - Vietnam War (1955–1975)
 - Bosnian War (1992–1995)
 - War on Terrorism (2001–Present)
 - War in Afghanistan (2001–2021)
 - War in Iraq (2003–2011)
 - Syrian Civil War (2011–present)
 - Libyan Civil War (2014–present)

- Somalia civil war (1991–2012)
- Great Recession (2007–2009)
- COVID-19 pandemic (2019–present)
 - COVID-19 recession (2020)
- Russo-Ukrainian War (2022–present)

American periods

- Classic and Postclassic eras, Central America (200–1519)
- Early Intermediate, Middle Horizon, Late Intermediate, Late Horizon (Peru, 200–1534)
 - Huari, Chimú, Chincha, Chanka people, Tiwanaku, Inca
- Baroque (New World, 1600–1750)
- Spanish hegemony (Americas, 1492 – 1832)
- Reconstruction era (the United States, 1865–1877) (Some of this time period is known as the “Old West”)
- Gilded Age (the United States, 1875–1900)
- Progressive Era (the United States, the 1890s–1920s)
- Jazz Age (the United States, the 1920s–1930s)
- Information Age (United States, 1970–present)
 - Modern age
 - Postmodern age

Australian periods

- Ancient Australia, First Nations (between 50,000 to 65,000–1788)
- Age of Discovery, European maritime exploration of Australia (1606–1802)
- Convict era, (1788–1868)
- Victorian era, (1837–1901)
- Federation era, (1890–1918)
- World War II, (1939–1945)
- Second Elizabethan Age, (1952–present)

Southeast Asian periods

- Srivijaya (Indonesia, 3rd – 14th centuries), Tarumanagara (358–723), Sailendra (8th and 9th centuries), Kingdom of Sunda (669–1579), Kingdom of Mataram (752–1045), Kediri (1045–1221), Singhasari (1222–1292), Majapahit (1293–1500)
- Chenla (Cambodia, 630 – 802) and Khmer Empire (Cambodia, 802–1432)
- Anterior Lý Dynasty and Triệu Việt Vương, Third Chinese domination, Khúc Family, Dương Đình Nghệ, Kiều Công Tiễn, Ngô Dynasty, The 12 Lords Rebellion, Đinh Dynasty, Prior Lê Dynasty, Lý Dynasty, Trần Dynasty, Hồ Dynasty, Fourth Chinese domination (Vietnam, 544–1427)

Filipino periods

- Neolithic-Iron Age (c. 10,000 BCE – CE 900)
- Archaic period (CE 900–1521)
- Spanish Period (1521–1898)
- American Period (1898–1946)
- Third Republic (1946–1972)
- Marcos era (1972–1986)
- Fifth Republic (1986–present)

Chinese periods

- Three Sovereigns and Five Emperors (2852–2070 BCE)
- Xia dynasty (2070–1600 BCE)
- Shang dynasty (1600–1046 BCE)
- Zhou dynasty (1046–221 BCE)
 - Western Zhou (1046–771 BCE)
 - Eastern Zhou (771–221 BCE)
 - Spring and Autumn period (771–476 BCE)
 - Warring States period (476–221 BCE)
- Qin Dynasty (221–206 BCE)
- Han Dynasty (206 BCE – 220 CE)
 - Western Han (206 BCE – 2 CE)
 - Xin dynasty (9–23 CE)
 - Eastern Han (25–220 CE)
- Six Dynasties (220–580)
 - Three Kingdoms (220–265)
 - Jin Dynasty (266–420)
 - Southern and Northern Dynasties (420–580)
- Sui Dynasty (580–618)
- Tang Dynasty (623–907)
- Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms period (907–960)
- Song Dynasty (960–1279)
 - Northern Song (960–1127), Liao Dynasty (907–1115)
 - Western Xia dynasty (1038–1227)
 - Southern Song (1127–1279), Jin dynasty (1115–1234)
- Yuan Dynasty (1271–1368)
- Ming Dynasty (1368–1644)
- Qing Dynasty (1644–1911)
- Republic of China (1912–1949)
 - Xinhai Revolution (1911–1912)
 - Warlord Era (1918–1927)
 - Chinese Civil War (1927-1936/1946-1950)
 - Second Sino-Japanese War (1937–1945)

- People's Republic of China and Taiwan (1949–present)

Central Asian periods

- Xiongnu (Mongolia, 220 BCE – CE 200)
- Rouran Khaganate (Mongolia, Manchuria, Xianbei, CE 330 – 555)
 - Sixteen Kingdoms (Xianbei, Turkic peoples, 304 – 439)
- Uyghur Khaganate (Mongolia, Manchuria, Tibet, 744 – 848)
- Liao Dynasty (Khitan people, 907 – 1125)
- Mongol Empire (Mongolia, 1206 – 1380)
- Qing dynasty (Manchu China, 1692 – 1911)

Egyptian periods

- Prehistoric Egypt (pre-3150 BCE)
- Early Dynastic Period or Archaic Period (two dynasties) (3150 BCE – 2686 BCE)
- Old Kingdom (four dynasties) (2686 BCE – 2181 BCE)
- First Intermediate Period (four dynasties) (2181 BCE – 2055 BCE)
- Middle Kingdom (three dynasties) (2055 BCE – 1650 BCE)
- Second Intermediate Period (four dynasties) (1650 BCE – 1550 BCE)
- New Kingdom (three dynasties) (1550 BCE – 1069 BCE)
- Third Intermediate Period (five dynasties) (1069 BCE – 664 BCE)
- Late Period of Ancient Egypt (six dynasties: of these six, two were Persian dynasties that ruled from capitals distant from Egypt) (664 BCE – c. 332 BCE)
- Argead and Ptolemaic dynasties (332 BCE – 30 BCE)
- Aegyptus (fifteen Roman dynasties that ruled from capitals distant from Egypt) (30 BCE – 641 CE)
 - Sasanian Egypt (one dynasty) (619-629)
- Coptic period (300 CE – 900 CE)
- Egypt under four foreign Arabic dynasties that ruled from capitals distant from Egypt
 - Rashidun Egypt (641–661)
 - Umayyad Egypt (661–750)
 - Abbasid Egypt (750–868 and 905-935)
- Tulunid dynasty (868–905)
- Ikhshidid dynasty (935–969)
- Fatimid dynasty (969–1171)
- Ayyubid dynasty (1171–1250)
- Mamluk dynasties (1250–1517)
 - Bahri dynasty (1250–1382)
 - Burji dynasty (1382–1517)
- Ottoman Egypt (Turk dynasty that ruled from a capital distant from Egypt) (1517–1867)
- Muhammad Ali dynasty (1805-1953)
 - Khedivate (1867–1914)

- Sultanate of Egypt (1914–1922)
- Kingdom of Egypt (1922–1953)
- Republican Egypt (1953–present)

European periods

- **Bronze Age** (c. 3000 BCE – c. 1050 BCE)
 - Early Aegean Civilization (Crete, Greece and Near East; c. 3000 BCE – c. 1050 BCE)^[4]
- **Iron Age** (c. 1050 BCE – c. 500 CE)
 - Greek expansion and colonization (c. 1050 BCE – 776 BCE)
 - **Archaic Greece** (776 BCE – 480 BCE) – begins with the First Olympiad, traditionally dated 776 BCE
 - Archaic period (776 BCE – 612 BCE) – the establishment of city-states in Greece
 - Pre-classical period (612 BCE – 480 BCE) – the fall of Nineveh to the second Persian invasion of Greece
 - **Classical antiquity** (480 BCE – 476 CE)
 - Classical Greece (480 BCE – 338 BCE)
 - Macedonian era (338 BCE – 323 BCE)
 - Hellenistic Greece (323 BCE – 146 BCE)
 - Late Roman Republic (147 BCE – 27 BCE)
 - Principate of the Roman Empire (27 BCE – 284 CE)
 - Late Antiquity (284 CE – 500 CE)
 - **Migration Period** (Europe, 300 CE – 700 CE)
- **Middle Ages** (Europe, 476–1453)
 - Byzantine era (330–1453)
 - Early Middle Ages (Europe, 476–1066)
 - Viking Age (Scandinavia, Europe, 793–1066)
 - High Middle Ages (Europe, 1066 – c. 1300)
 - Late Middle Ages (Europe, c. 1300 – 1453)
 - The Renaissance (Europe, c. 1300 – c. 1601)
- **Early modern period** (Europe, 1453–1789)
 - Age of Discovery (or Exploration) (Europe, c. 1400 – 1770)
 - Polish Golden Age (Poland, 1507–1572)
 - Golden Age of Piracy (1650–1730)
 - Elizabethan era (the United Kingdom, 1558–1603)
 - Protestant Reformation (Europe, 16th century)
 - Classicism (Europe, 16th – 18th centuries)
 - Industrious Revolution, (Europe, 16th – 18th centuries)
 - Jacobean era (the United Kingdom, 1603–1625)
 - Petrine Era (Russia, 1689–1725)
 - Age of Enlightenment (or Reason) (Europe, 18th century)
 - Scientific Revolution (Europe, 18th century)

- Long nineteenth century (1789–1914)
 - Georgian era (the United Kingdom, 1714–1830)
 - Industrial Revolution (Europe, United States, elsewhere 18th and 19th centuries)
 - Age of European colonialism and imperialism
 - Romantic era (1770–1850)
 - Napoleonic era (1799–1815)
 - Victorian era (the United Kingdom, 1837–1901); British hegemony (1815-1914) much of world, around the same time period.
 - Edwardian era (the United Kingdom, 1901–1914)
- First, interwar Britain and Second World Wars (1914–1945)
- Cold War (1945–1991)
- Post-Cold War / Postmodernity (1991–present)

Indian periods

- Indus Valley Civilization (3300 BCE – 1300 BCE)
- Vedic period (1500 BCE – 500 BCE)
 - Mahajanapada kingdoms
- Maurya Empire (321 BCE – 185 BCE)
- Kushan Empire (185 BCE – 220 CE), Satavahana Empire (230 BCE – 220 CE),
- Gupta Empire (320 CE – 535 CE)
- Vakata Empire (300CE –650 CE)
- Middle kingdoms of India (1 CE – 1279 CE)
 - Pala Empire (750–1174)
 - Rashtrakuta Dynasty
 - Sena Empire (1070–1230)
 - Hoysala Empire (1026 –1343), Kakatiya Empire (1083–1323)
- Medieval India (1206–1526)
 - Vijayanagara Empire (1336–1646), Gajapati Empire (1434–1541), Reddy dynasty (1325–1448)& Delhi Sultanate (1206-1526)
- Mughal Empire (1526–1857)
- Maratha Empire (1674–1818)
- British Raj (1858–1947)
- Independence (1947–present)

Japanese periods

- Jōmon period (10,501 BCE – 400 BCE)
- Yayoi period (450 BCE – 250 CE)
- Kofun period (250–600)
- Asuka period (643–710)
- Nara period (743–794)
- Heian period (795–1185)

- Kamakura period (1185–1333)
- Muromachi period (1333–1573)^[5]
- Azuchi–Momoyama period (1573–1603)
- Tokugawa shogunate (1603–1868)
- Meiji period (1868–1912)
- Taishō period (1912–1926)
- Shōwa period (1926–1989)
 - Post-occupation era (1952 – present)
- Heisei period (1989–2019)
- Reiwa period (2019–present)

West Asian periods

- Mesopotamia
 - Samarra culture
 - Hassuna culture
 - Halaf-Ubaid Transitional period
 - Ubaid period
 - Uruk period
 - Jemdet Nasr period (3100 BCE – 2900 BCE)
 - Early Dynastic Period (2900 BCE – 2270 BCE)
 - Akkadian Empire (2270 BCE – 2083 BCE)
 - Gutian Dynasty (2083 BCE – 2050 BCE)
 - Ur III period (2050 BCE – 1940 BCE)
 - First Babylonian dynasty (1830 BCE – 1531 BCE), Hittites (1800 BCE – 1178 BCE)
 - Kassites (1531 BCE – 1135 BCE), Mitanni (1500 BCE – 1300 BCE)
 - Neo-Assyrian Empire (934 BCE – 609 BCE)
 - Neo-Babylonian Empire (626 BCE – 539 BCE), Medes (678 BCE – 549 BCE)
- Persian Empires (550 BCE – 651 CE)
 - Achaemenid Empire (550 BCE – 330 BCE)
 - Conquered by Macedonian Empire (330 BCE – 312 BCE)
 - Seleucid Empire (312 BCE – 63 BCE)
 - Parthian Empire (247 BCE – 224 CE)
 - Sasanian Empire (224 CE – 651 CE)
- Islamicate periods^[6] (7th – 21st centuries)
 - *High Caliphate* (685–945)^[7]
 - *Earlier Middle Period* (945–1250)^[6]
 - *Later Middle Period* (1250–1500)^[6]
 - Rashidun Caliphate (632–661)
 - Umayyad Caliphate (661–750)
 - Abbasid Caliphate (750–1258), Fatimid Caliphate (909–1171)
 - Buyid dynasty (934–1055)
 - Seljuq dynasty (1055–1171)

- Ayyubid dynasty (1171–1341)
- Ottoman Empire (1300–1923), Safavid Empire (1501–1736)

Mythological and astrological time periods

- Astrological Ages
 - Age of Taurus
 - Age of Aries
 - Age of Aquarius
- Greek Mythology (*See also: Ages of Man*)
 - Golden Age (self-sufficient)
 - Silver Age (self-indulgent)
 - Bronze Age (warlike)
 - Heroic Age (nobly aspirant)
 - Iron Age (violent)
- Aztec Mythology
 - Nahui-Ocelotl, Destroyed by Jaguars
 - Nahui-Ehécatl, Destroyed by Hurricane
 - Nahuiahuiahuatl, Destroyed by Flaming Rain
 - Nahui-Atl, Destroyed by Flood
 - Nahui-Ollin, Destroyed by Earthquakes (current)

Geologic time periods

The geologic time scale covers the extent of the existence of Earth, from about 4600 million years ago to the present day. It is marked by Global Boundary Stratotype Sections and Points. Geologic time units are (in order of descending specificity) eons, eras, periods, epochs, and ages; and the corresponding chronostratigraphic units, which measure "rock-time", are eonothems, erathems, systems, series, and stages.

The second and third timelines are each subsection of their preceding timeline as indicated by asterisks. The Cenozoic is sometimes divided into the Quaternary and Tertiary periods, although the latter is no longer used officially.

Cosmological time periods

13.8 billion years ago: The Big Bang

Time Period	Duration	Description
<u>Planck Epoch</u>	<i>From the start to 10^{-43} seconds after the Big Bang</i>	Very little concrete [confirmed] information is known about this epoch. Different theories propose different views on this particular time.
<u>Grand Unification Epoch</u>	<i>Between 10^{-43} to 10^{-36} seconds after the Big Bang</i>	The result of the universe expanding and cooling down during the Planck epoch. All <u>fundamental forces</u> except gravity are unified.
<u>Electroweak Epoch</u>	<i>Between 10^{-36} seconds to 10^{-12} seconds after the Big Bang</i>	The universe cools down to 10^{28} kelvin. The fundamental forces are split into the <u>strong force</u> and the <u>electroweak force</u> .
<u>Inflationary Epoch</u>	<i>Between 10^{-36} seconds to 10^{-32} seconds after the Big Bang</i>	The shape of the universe flattens due to <u>cosmic inflation</u> .
<u>Quark Epoch</u>	<i>Between 10^{-12} seconds to 10^{-6} seconds after the Big Bang</i>	Cosmic inflation has ended. Quarks are present in the universe at this point. The <u>electroweak force</u> is divided again into the <u>weak force</u> and <u>electromagnetic force</u> .
<u>Hadron Epoch</u>	<i>Between 10^{-6} seconds to 1 second after the Big Bang</i>	The universe has cooled enough for <u>quarks</u> to form <u>hadrons</u> , <u>protons</u> , <u>neutrons</u> .
<u>Lepton Epoch</u>	<i>Between 1 second to 10 seconds after the Big Bang</i>	Most <u>hadrons</u> and anti-hadrons annihilate each other, leaving behind <u>leptons</u> and anti-leptons.
<u>Photon Epoch</u>	<i>Between 10 seconds to 370,000 years after the Big Bang</i>	Most <u>leptons</u> and anti-leptons annihilate each other. The universe is dominated by <u>photons</u> .
<u>Nucleosynthesis</u>	<i>Between 3 minutes to 20 minutes after the Big Bang</i>	The temperature of the universe has cooled down enough to allow <u>atomic nuclei</u> to form via <u>nuclear fusion</u> .
<u>Recombination</u>	<i>About 377,000 years after the Big Bang</i>	<u>Hydrogen</u> and <u>helium</u> atoms form.
<u>Reionization</u>	<i>Between 150 million and 1 billion years after the Big Bang</i>	The first <u>stars</u> and <u>quasars</u> form due to <u>gravitational collapse</u> .

See also

- Art of Europe
- Geologic time scale
- List of fossil sites with link directory.
- List of timelines around the world.
- Logarithmic timeline shows all history on one page in ten lines.
- Periodization for a discussion of the tendency to try to fit history into non-overlapping periods.

References

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2. Iles, Dr Louise (December 30, 2016). "Big digs: The year 2016 in archaeology" (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-38381878>). *BBC News*. Retrieved January 3, 2017.
3. Lohr, Steve (February 11, 2012). "Opinion | Big Data's Impact in the World" (<https://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/12/sunday-review/big-datas-impact-in-the-world.html>). *The New York Times*. ISSN 0362-4331 (<https://www.worldcat.org/issn/0362-4331>). Retrieved July 2, 2019.
4. The area had settlements as far back as 9000 BC; see [Timeline of ancient Greece](#)
5. [Bowman 2000](#), pp. 118–161.
6. *The Venture of Islam, Volume 2: The Expansion of Islam in the Middle Periods* (<https://books.google.com/books?id=LKO5GRC8j1MC&pg=PA3>) (1974), p. 3.
7. *A Concise History of the Middle East* (<https://books.google.com/books?id=BMxVDgAAQBAJ&pg=PT53>) (2015), p. 53.

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